

Broadcasting Ant Bait Products in Rough Terrain or by People with Limited Mobility

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Ant bait products contain a “carrier” (usually de-fatted, processed corn grit) and an attractant (usually soybean oil) in which the active ingredient is dissolved, unlike granular insecticides with ingredients that kill ants on contact. For best use, scatter the baits around the outside of individual ant mounds or broadcast them evenly over the entire, heavily infested area (with five or more fire ant mounds per ¼ acre yard). Foraging worker ants find bait particles and carry them back to the nest or “sip” off the insecticide-containing oil. When applying baits, follow the “broadcast” instructions as stated on the product label. Most product labels recommend the application of the bait at a rate of 1 to 1½ pounds per acre (see [Calculating Areas for Pesticide Treatment around the Home](#)).

To quickly broadcast such a small amount of product over an entire yard, use a handheld, crank-type spreader available at most garden

centers (Fig. 1 and 2).

These devices apply the bait in a 10- to 12-foot swath. Set the opening at the bottom of the spreader to allow as small an opening as possible while still having bait particles drop out (about 3/16 inch). Walk quickly to broadcast the bait (for more details, see [Managing Imported Fire Ants in Urban Areas](#)).

Unfortunately, some areas requiring treatment are in rough terrain, may be steep, or have landscaping obstacles such as pricklypear clumps, rocks, trees, or yard art. In addition, some individuals with limited mobility may not be able to walk fast enough or long enough to broadcast the product to the entire area. The following technique allows a person to broadcast the bait without having to rapidly walk swaths.

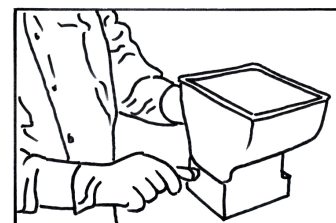


Figure 1. Broadcast spreader.



Figure 2. Broadcasting with a spreader.



THE STATIONARY (“PIROUETTE”) METHOD FOR BROADCASTING BAIT

1. Determine how far the spreader will apply the bait. Most will broadcast particles about 10 to 12 feet.
2. Stand in one spot at the half swath-width (5 to 6 feet) away in the middle of the 12-foot area to be treated. Broadcast the bait while turning around on that spot or make a quarter-of-a-turn between each crank of the spreader (Fig. 3).

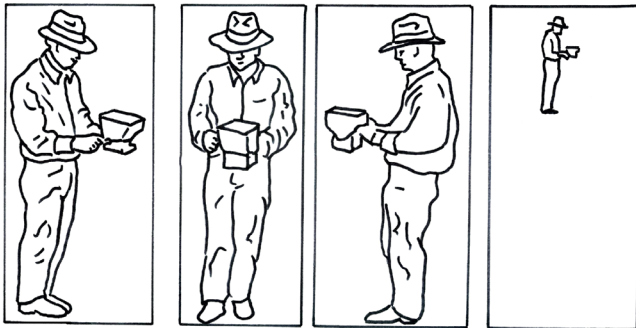


Figure 3. Turn full circle, broadcasting the bait using the stationary method and then walking to the next spot.

3. After turning a full circle, move to the next spot, which should be slightly less than one swath-width (10 to 12 feet) from the first.
4. Repeat until the entire area has received bait, producing a pattern that resembles that in Figure 4.

If you did not apply enough volume of bait product during the first set of stops, repeat the process to “touch up” areas missed or repeat stops. Use all the bait required but avoid over-treating. Always use fresh bait and apply it when ants are actively foraging (looking for food).

For more information regarding fire ant management, see Extension publications *Managing Red Imported Fire Ants in Urban Areas*, *Broadcast Baits for Fire Ant Control*, or *Fire Ant Control: The Two-Step Method and Other Approaches* posted on <http://AgriLifeBookstore.org>.

The information given herein is for educational purposes only. Reference to commercial products or trade names is made with the understanding that no discrimination is intended and no endorsement by the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service is implied.

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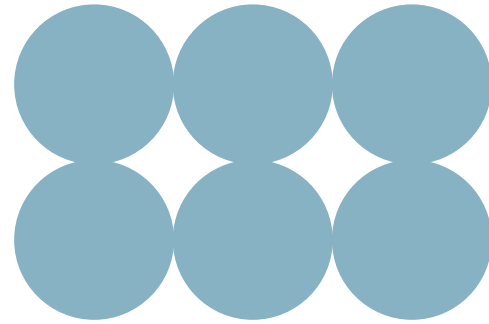


Figure 4. Broadcast bait pattern using stationary technique.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Wizzie Brown and Molly Keck (Extension Program Specialists—Integrated Pest Management, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service) reviewed this revision.

REFERENCES

Calculating Areas for Pesticide Treatment around the Home

u.tamu.edu/ento-013

Managing Red Imported Fire Ants in Urban Areas

www.extension.org/pages/11004/managing-imported-fire-ants-in-urban-areas-printable-version

Broadcast Baits for Fire Ant Control

www.agrilifebookstore.org/product-p/e-628.htm

Fire Ant Control: The Two-Step Method and Other Approaches

www.agrilifebookstore.org/product-p/ento-034.htm